



USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service

Indiana Crop & Weather Report

USDA, NASS, Indiana Field Office
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CROP REPORT FOR WEEK ENDING APRIL 16

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY

Heavy rains, strong wind, and hail occurred over the weekend in many areas of the state, according to the Indiana Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. There have been several reports of wind and hail damage across central areas of the state. After the weekend rain, ponding is evident in many fields. Earlier in the week a considerable amount of field work was accomplished with some operations beginning to plant corn.

FIELD CROPS REPORT

There were **3.7 days suitable for field work**. Three percent of the intended **corn** acreage has been **planted** compared with 11 percent last year and 6 percent for the 5-year average. Seeding of **oats** continued.

Thirty-one percent of the winter wheat acreage is **jointed** compared with 37 percent last year and 38 percent for the 5-year average. Winter wheat **condition** is rated 78 percent good to excellent compared with 70 percent last year at this time.

Major activities during the week included: soil preparation, applying fertilizer, preparing equipment for planting, hauling grain to market, hauling and applying manure and taking care of livestock.

LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE REPORT

Pasture condition is rated 9 percent excellent, 60 percent good, 25 percent fair, 5 percent poor and 1 percent very poor. Livestock remain in mostly good condition. Hay supplies are reported to be 1 percent very short, 7 percent short, 80 percent adequate, and 12 percent surplus.

CROP PROGRESS TABLE

Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5-Year Avg
Percent				
Corn Planted	3	0	11	6
Winter Wheat Jointed	31	14	37	38

CROP CONDITION TABLE

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Percent					
Pasture	1	5	25	60	9
Winter Wheat 2006	1	3	18	61	17
Winter Wheat 2005	1	6	23	56	14

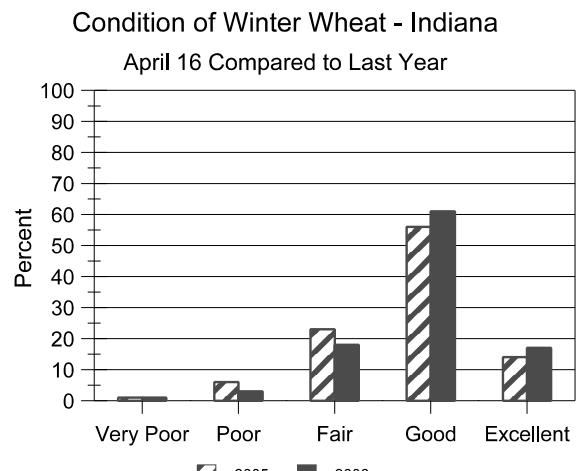
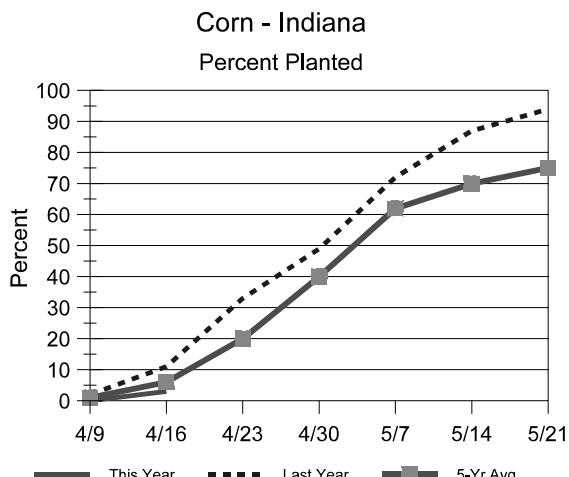
SOIL MOISTURE & DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK TABLE

	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Percent			
Topsoil			
Very Short	0	0	2
Short	3	3	15
Adequate	60	56	69
Surplus	37	41	14
Subsoil			
Very Short	1	1	2
Short	7	8	8
Adequate	71	73	81
Surplus	21	18	9
Days Suitable	3.7	2.0	4.9

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http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Indiana

Crop Progress



Other Agricultural Comments And News

Is Tillage Needed For Your Soybean Crop?

Every fall and spring, producers are faced with tillage decisions for the next crop year. Generally, tillage--whether for corn or soybean--has shown limited advantage in yield and economic returns, except in few cases where drainage and field conditions are challenging. As preparations for spring field operations are underway, producers need to stop and think about the choice of tillage system, given the challenges faced with energy prices and the associated cost of conventional tillage operations. Primary tillage, such as with a chisel plow or subsoiler, often requires 1-1.5 gallons of fuel per acre or more. A secondary tillage pass through the field with a field cultivator or disk may use 0.5 to 0.7 gallon of fuel per acre. These additional fuel costs for tillage operations, in addition to other input costs, make conservation tillage and no-till, in particular, a far better choice given the insignificant yield differences.

Observing the amount of tillage conducted last fall on corn stalks in some areas of the state

raises a few questions. Are the tillage operations really needed after corn? If the answer to this question is based on yield improvement, then the answer is no. Results from a long-term tillage study established in 2003 on eight research farms across Iowa to evaluate the effect of five tillage systems including no-till, strip-tillage, chisel plow, deep-rip, and moldboard plow with corn-soybean and corn-corn-soybean rotations showed no significant difference between soybean yields of the five tillage systems with the two crop rotations (see Figure 1, which can be viewed at: <http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/icm/2006/4-3/tillage.html>, page 2). The results also showed that the economic return with no-till was greater than those of other tillage systems.

The argument of tilling corn residue to improve organic matter is unsupported by research. Studies have shown that incorporating residue with intensive tillage will do more damage by

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Is Tillage Needed For Your Soybean Crop? (Continued)

accelerating the loss of organic matter due to mineralization of organic matter and alteration of microbial activities. The addition of organic matter from incorporating residue is far less than the losses caused by degrading the soil's carbon pool. Additionally, there is greater potential loss of organic matter associated with conventional tillage due to the risk of soil erosion. In a no-tillage system, residue can decompose slowly and release nutrients more efficiently into the soil system for crop use.

Generally, tilling corn residue for the soybean crop year has no advantage in improving soybean yield. There may be some challenges in managing corn residue, but simple modification of the planter by including residue cleaners and other residue management attachments are far more cost effective than the expenses associated with conventional tillage.

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